

use protections, neighboring property owners, and the environment. Therefore, I urge my colleagues to vote against the bill.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4772, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

PROUD TO BE AN AMERICAN CITIZEN ACT

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5323) to require the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide for ceremonies on or near Independence Day for administering oaths of allegiance to legal immigrants whose applications for naturalization have been approved, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5323

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Proud to Be an American Citizen Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

The Congress finds as follows:

(1) The United States is a nation of immigrants.

(2) Immigrants strengthen the economic and political ties of the United States with other nations.

(3) Immigrants enhance the Nation's ability to compete in the global market.

(4) Immigrants contribute to the Nation's scientific, literary, artistic, and other cultural resources.

(5) A properly regulated system of legal immigration is in the Nation's interest.

(6) The Naturalization Oath of Allegiance impresses on new United States citizens—

(A) the shared American values of liberty, democracy, and equal opportunity; and

(B) the obligation to respect and abide by the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights.

(8) Naturalization rewards legal immigrants who have abided by all Federal laws and Department of Homeland Security regulations.

(9) Naturalization bestows all the legal rights, privileges, and responsibilities of a United States citizen.

SEC. 3. INDEPENDENCE DAY CEREMONIES FOR OATHS OF ALLEGIANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall make available funds each fiscal year to the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services or to public or private nonprofit entities to support public ceremonies for administering oaths of allegiance under section 337(a) of the Immi-

gration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1448(a)) to legal immigrants whose applications for naturalization have been approved.

(b) CEREMONIES.—A ceremony conducted with funds under this section—

(1) shall be held on a date that is on or near Independence Day; and

(2) shall include appropriate outreach, ceremonial, and celebratory activities.

(c) SELECTION OF SITES.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Homeland Security shall select the site for each ceremony conducted with funds under this section.

(2) SELECTION PROCESS.—In selecting a site under paragraph (1), the Secretary of Homeland Security should consider—

(A) the number of naturalization applicants living in proximity to the site; and

(B) the degree of participation in and support for the ceremony by the local community at the site.

(d) AMOUNTS AVAILABLE; USE OF FUNDS.—

(1) AMOUNTS AVAILABLE.—Amounts made available under this section for each ceremony shall not exceed \$5,000.

(2) FUNDS.—Funds made available under this section may be used only for the following:

(A) Costs of personnel of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services and the Federal judiciary (including travel and overtime expenses).

(B) Site rental, including audio equipment rental.

(C) Logistical requirements, including sanitation.

(D) Costs for printing brochures about the naturalization participants and the naturalization process.

(3) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—Funds that are otherwise available to the Department of Homeland Security to carry out naturalization activities shall be available to carry out this section.

(e) APPLICATION.—No amount may be made available under this section to an entity that is not part of the Department of Homeland Security, for supporting a ceremony described in subsection (b), unless—

(1) the entity submits an application to the Secretary of Homeland Security, in a form and manner specified by the Secretary of Homeland Security; and

(2) the Secretary of Homeland Security approves the application.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 5323, currently under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 5323, the Proud to Be an American Citizen Act, which enables U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services or nonprofit entities to conduct naturalization ceremonies on or near Independ-

ence Day each year. The legislation gives us an opportunity to underscore the importance and privilege of U.S. citizenship.

This legislation does not authorize new funds, but would provide up to \$5,000 for each ceremony organized on Independence Day out of the funds already available to the Department of Homeland Security. The moneys provided under this bill would be sufficient to cover the basics for a ceremony to honor those who have worked hard and met the legal requirements to become United States citizens.

The funds may be used only for the cost of government personnel needed to administer the Oath of Allegiance, facilities rental, brochures, and other logistics. The bill requires any non-government entity seeking to organize a naturalization ceremony to receive approval through the Department of Homeland Security.

The bill allows new Americans to celebrate their naturalization in conjunction with celebrating America on Independence Day. I believe it is important that we support those who want to take the final step toward becoming Americans and those who have legally moved through the immigration system to obtain citizenship.

I urge Members to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I am happy to rise in support of this legislation because immigration is one of the basic foundations of the Nation, and the contributions of immigrants are too many to be counted.

This legislation recognizes these principles, and in addition, authorizes the Homeland Security Secretary to dispense \$5,000 to public and private nonprofit entities to host naturalization ceremonies. This purpose originally was authorized as a part of the 1996 immigration law, and I believe it deserves reauthorization.

I join with the chairman of the committee in urging our colleagues to vote "yes" on the bill.

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, as the original sponsor of H.R. 5323, I commend the House for adopting the Proud to Be an American Citizen Act.

I want to thank Chairman SENSENBRENNER and Ranking Member CONYERS of the Judiciary Committee for their support of this bill, as well as Mr. HOBSON of Ohio for his original cosponsorship.

H.R. 5323 provides authorization for Citizenship and Immigration Services (CIS) to support community citizenship ceremonies. A similar provision was enacted into law in the 1996 immigration reform bill, but has since expired.

CIS reports that more than 28,000 new citizens will be sworn in at 133 citizenship ceremonies around the country. These ceremonies are marked by Democrats and Republicans alike. Not only have many of us participated in these ceremonies, but throughout the years, so have President Bush, Madeline Albright, Ronald Reagan, and Arnold Schwarzenegger.

H.R. 5323 recognizes those immigrants who have played by the rules and been through this country's rigorous immigration screening process. Legal immigrants have earned their citizenship after years of waiting, high fees, learning English, and a passing grade on a citizenship test. The culmination of this all is taking the Oath of Citizenship.

Every year in my district around the 4th of July, I host a Citizenship Ceremony. This past year, 120 immigrants from China, Fiji Island, Algeria, Canada and other countries took their Oath, and sang our National Anthem and America the Beautiful in a community wide celebration.

Just this month, CIS and the Department of the Interior's National Park Service announced a partnership to welcome new citizens to the U.S. via national parks. In the last week, citizenship ceremonies have been held at Ellis Island National Park in New York to Yosemite National Park in California.

All of us can look back to our own families and find the first generation immigrants. Let us welcome new citizens as we would have wanted our ancestors to be welcomed.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 5323, the "Proud to be an American Citizen Act," which requires the Secretary of Homeland Security to make funds available to support public naturalization ceremonies that are held on a date that is on or near Independence Day. These funds would be given to the Director of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) or to public or private nonprofit entities. The Secretary would select the sites for the ceremonies, approve the entities receiving the funds, and dispense up to, but no more than, \$5,000 for each ceremony.

The use of the funds would be limited to the costs of personnel from USCIS and the Federal judiciary, including travel and overtime expenses; site and audio equipment rentals; logistical requirements; and costs for printing brochures about the naturalization participants and the naturalization process.

Naturalization rewards legal immigrants who have played by the rules and abided by all United States laws and USCIS regulations. The naturalization ceremony is not just a formality. Taking the Oath of Allegiance is a critical legal step in becoming a naturalized citizen. The words of the Oath of Allegiance convey the core meaning of becoming an American citizen. These words reflect the shared American values of liberty, democracy, and equal opportunity; and the obligation to abide by the Constitution, including the Bill of Rights.

The Oath of Allegiance should not be taken in an empty room without fanfare, particularly on Independence Day. I urge all members to show their support for those who are proud to become American citizens by voting for H.R. 5323.

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I return the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I do the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 5323, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1700

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION MODERNIZATION ACT

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to bill (H.R. 2066) to amend title 40, United States Code, to establish a Federal Acquisition Service, to replace the General Supply Fund and the Information Technology Fund with an Acquisition Services Fund, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

Page 2, line 25, strike out "up to five"

Page 10, line 7, strike out "or" and all that follows through the end of line 9, and insert:

"(B) the exceptional difficulty in recruiting or retaining a qualified employee, or

"(C) a temporary emergency hiring need,

Page 10, line 20, strike out "December 31, 2011." and insert: "December 31, 2011."

Page 10, strike out line 21 and all that follows through page 13, line 8, and insert the following new section and renumber subsequent section:

SEC. 5. DISPOSAL OF FEDERAL SURPLUS PROPERTY TO HISTORIC LIGHT STATIONS.

Section 549(c)(3)(B) of title 40, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in clause (vii), by striking "or" after the semicolon;

(2) in clause (viii), by striking the period and inserting "; or"; and

(3) by adding at the end the following:

"(iz) a historic light station as defined under section 308(e)(2) of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470w-7(e)(2)), including a historic light station conveyed under subsection (b) of that section, notwithstanding the number of hours that the historic light station is open to the public."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. VAN HOLLEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Virginia?

There was no objection.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 2066, the General Services Administration Modernization Act, which was introduced by Armed Services Committee Chairman HUNTER and myself last year. This legislation passed the House last May and was recently passed by the Senate with a handful of modifications which we are here today to accept in order to send the legisla-

tion to the President's desk for signature.

This important legislation would authorize a much-needed reorganization and streamlining of the General Services Administration, the Federal agency that is charged with leveraging the Federal Government's buying power to purchase commercial goods and services in a manner that maximizes taxpayer dollars.

Each year, GSA buys products and services from the private sector worth well over \$30 billion and resells them to Federal agencies through two different services. The Federal Technology Service, or FTS, uses the Information Technology Fund purchase information technology; and the Federal Supply Service, the FSS, uses the General Supply Fund to purchase commercial goods and services.

This bifurcated system may have made sense when the IT fund was created two decades ago when information technology was in its infancy. Today, however, laptop computers, cell phones and e-mail are as ubiquitous as desks and phones. The business case, for separate systems to handle IT goods and services, no longer exists. In fact, the bifurcated system has become a barrier to coordinated acquisition of management services and the technology needed to support a total solution.

H.R. 2066 would amend GSA's organic statute by enacting structural reform to GSA's current organization in order to consolidate the Federal Supply Service and the Federal Technology Service into a single entity operating out of a unified fund, providing Federal agencies with a one-stop shop to acquire all of their commercial goods and services. This change in statute would provide GSA with the structure it needs to bring it in line with the current commercial marketplace.

The environment in which the Federal Government purchases goods and services has changed dramatically in recent years. H.R. 2066 would remove the old structures that inhibit efficient Federal purchases and solutions that are a mix of products, services and technology. The Federal marketplace should reflect the best of the commercial marketplace, both in the products and service we buy and the way that we buy them.

I would urge my colleagues to accept these amendments and support H.R. 2066.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The chairman of the committee, the Government Reform committee, Mr. DAVIS, has covered the bill well. I commend him for his work on this piece of legislation.

I would only add to his description of the bill that it also contains provisions that would give civilian agencies additional tools to maintain their acquisition workforces by allowing agencies